

Chapter 1 : ifp | Independent Filmmaker Project

In the independent film business, PPMs are usually: a Rule offering to raise up to \$1,,, or a Rule offering which allows the filmmaker to raise up to \$5,,, or a Rule offering.

If you think shooting your film was tough, just wait until Film Distributors get their hands on you. Distributors are in the game to profit from films that are easy to sell, not to nurture filmmakers. An independent film will languish on the shelf indefinitely if it is not marketable. Self-distribution platforms allow filmmakers to distribute their films independently, bypassing traditional distributors. It may seem like a tedious task, but without some form of distribution, your film will languish on the shelf forever. This article will cover the independent film distribution options that are generally available to independent filmmakers. Finding a reputable independent film distributor The ideal situation was and still is to sign a distribution deal with a reputable film distributor who will then take care of all the possible distribution channels: In the ideal situation, the distributor pays the filmmaker a decent advance and they then split the revenues after the distributor has recouped costs this is known as Gross Adjusted Deal. Conversely, with the First Dollar Split deal, in which the distributor and filmmaker do a split with no advance payment, the distributor is not under as much pressure to do anything with the film and may completely waste your time and leave the film on the shelf until the contract expires and you manage to snatch it back. This was extremely hard to obtain before the recession and is now all but impossible. Of course they will want to see the film and all the publicity material, to determine whether the film is marketable. If your independent film is not marketable, nobody will distribute it, for the simple reason that there is no money to be made from it. If people do not think they can make money off your film, they will leave it on the shelf without mercy. This is probably something worth considering when preparing your feature film, but if you have completed your film and are seeking distribution, it is pretty much too late to do anything about that, although radical re-editing can sometimes make a film more marketable. Is this the end of your film? The answer is no. For example, with CreateSpace you can submit your film and all the artwork electronically " completely free " and your film will be available for sale as professionally-made DVDs on Amazon. CreateSpace is part of Amazon. There are no start-up fees for filmmakers and it is guaranteed and instantaneous distribution. Sure, we all want to see our films on the big screen, but when all else fails, self-distribution will allow your film to be bought by as many people as are willing to watch it. Depending on how popular your film is, you may even make a good profit! Independent film self-distribution is now unquestionably the way forward for the overwhelming majority of small independent films. Even before the massive economic recession, it was next to impossible to secure meaningful distribution for small independent films. The truth is that there is nothing intrinsically wrong with cheap mediocre independent films: Many people enjoy scruffy independent feature films if they are quirky and enjoyable! However, the problem with these films is that they are impossible to distribute profitably via traditional means cinemas, television. For this reason, independent film self-distribution was the only option for niche independent feature films. When all was said and done, my guess is that very few of these feature films were seen by more than people, and did not make their money back, let alone make a profit. The filmmakers learned valuable lessons in filmmaking and the business of films, but it was not a viable business by any stretch of the imagination. The reason for the lack of economic viability of independent feature films was simply that, no matter how cheaply they were distributed, the costs always exceeded the revenues. How can an independent feature film make a profit if it cannot even find people willing to spend three dollars for a copy or a screening? The good news is that, thanks to CreateSpace, which is part of Amazon. This solution is efficient and economical because it is fast and has no start-up costs for the filmmakers. The advantage of this independent film self-distribution approach is not just the enhanced likelihood of actually making a profit on your independent feature film: There might have been a golden age for independent filmmaking, but filmmakers generally agree that there has never been a golden age for independent film distribution: Of course, when it comes to independent film self-distribution, one always had the option of ordering a batch of a few thousand professionally made DVDs and then selling those on Amazon. As an independent film

self-distribution solution this is pretty good, but it made the filmmakers carry the cost of DVD replication or duplication. With CreateSpace, all of that is handled by them on a per-order basis. This reduces the costs and therefore also the risks for the filmmakers. In short, despite the bad economy and a largely paralyzed independent film industry, it has never been so easy and risk-free for independent filmmakers to self-distribute their indie films, make their money back and perhaps even make a profit, depending on how many copies you manage to sell. Of course marketing and publicity will always be necessary, otherwise nobody will go to Amazon. In spite of all of the above, many independent filmmakers understandably still dream of securing theatrical distribution for their independent film. That is what all filmmakers dream of, and understandably so! If you decide to attempt that route before going for self-distribution, I was given an extremely valuable tip by a film publicist at the Palm Springs Short Film Festival: Choose a screening date, give the film distributors and buyers plenty of notice and make it emphatically clear that there will be absolutely no sneak previews or DVD copies for anyone. All film distributors and buyers must watch your film at the same screening – absolutely no exceptions! In addition to making it impossible for an early rejection to kill your film, this will also garner your film a considerable amount of respect and might even generate some excitement about the film that no one is allowed to watch in advance! A few thoughts on independent film distributors I have met a good number of small independent film distributors – the sort of distributors that nobody has ever heard of, but who nevertheless have distributed a number of independent feature films, with varying degrees of success. Be extremely reluctant to leave them copies of your film, and if you are in the early stages of searching through distribution, absolutely no film distributor or buyer should be allowed to watch the film ahead of the official screening of the distributors, because if somebody turns it down early, your film is instantly dead. Be suspicious and reserved and try and get some references. Some of these characters are sleazy, so be prepared for that sort of experience.

Chapter 2 : Filmmaker Magazine | The Magazine of Independent Film

The advantage of this independent film self-distribution approach is not just the enhanced likelihood of actually making a profit on your independent feature film: it also cuts out all those nasty, sleazy independent film distributors who have been taking advantage of independent filmmakers for so many years.

Mirvish gives you soup-to-nuts, toes-to-noes, cradle-to-grave detailed advice on every aspect of the filmmaking lifestyle and craft while dropping laser-guided truth bombs on playing the Hollywood game, and getting your feature, documentary, short film, YouTube video, TV show or Hollywood blockbuster made and seen. If you teach film classes, and are considering the book for your students, you may be able to receive a free, advance copy of the book. And feel free to check out the Suggested Curriculum if you need any ideas on how to structure an entire class around the book, or if you just need a timetable for yourself on how to make an indie film. What people are saying about Dan Mirvish and his new book *As someone who has been producing for 25 years, I resent this book. With one foot in a hot tub and the other on a mountain top he plants his independent flag somewhere between heaven and hell. In the great independent tradition of father John Cassavetes, Dan does what he has to do to exist in the inhospitable world of the true independent film artist. Dan Mirvish remedies this inadequacy by providing all the information you need to know in this erudite, anecdotal and humorous book. Brevity is the essence of wit and Mirvish imparts his philosophy with a poignancy that becomes part of your filmmaking DNA Presenting helpful hints on the indie film business, Mirvish will save you much money and aggravation. His discussion of the ins and outs of Distribution are worth the price of the book alone. If you are going to make it in this competitive indie world you must secure this book. This is the one! I wish this book existed when I first started making films. He is a legitimate insider with a wealth of information and knowledge. If you have a budget for only one book, this is the one. This investment will pay off and help you not only make money, but to build a career and keep your focus where it should be. Equally applicable to traditional indie filmmaking, and also the brave-new world of digital content creators working at any level, from YouTube to network TV. Dan Mirvish demystifies the nitty gritty aspects of making your own film with enthusiastic DIY flair- seriously, I wish I had this book when we were trying to figure out what K-1s were for the first time! Read for advice, inspiration, and to remind yourself that with enough willpower and a little ingenuity it can be done. I am constantly amazed by his ingenuity. Not only has he been there everywhere and done that all of it , he writes with a wit and humor that makes the whole thing a joy to behold. Seigel, veteran New York entertainment attorney "For two decades, whenever I need advice on anything independent film-related, Dan Mirvish is the first person I ask. When people ask me for advice on indie film, I often am quoting Dan. On indie film, it may be the only book you ever need to buy. I also did not realize that the author is the co-founder of the Slamdance Film Festival. Those two facts, each individually and by themselves, made whatever he had to say gospel. More importantly, he wrote about something that he actually did and not just heard about. Unlike most authors of filmmaking books, Mirvish has made several feature films, he has been to dozens of festivals with his movies, he has negotiated countless deals with representatives and he has founded and run his own major film festival. So he offers what the audience most craves: And he drops truth bombs constantly: It is completely applicable, very accessible and totally useful. I think it will come in handy to a great many filmmakers who are looking for guidance. The book makes it feel like something which can, and will, be conquered. The book makes filmmaking understandable, like a how-to guide, while still allowing freedom for the filmmaker to explore and create. The sexual innuendo, porn, wanna-be hipster attitude is off-putting.*

Chapter 3 : Independent Film Distribution Tips: a Guide for Indie Filmmakers

While most books on independent filmmaking talk about how to make a film with a budget of anywhere from \$50, to half a million dollars or more, the reality of the indie film world is that most filmmakers rarely have more than a few thousand dollars at their disposal for making their film.

United Artists The studio system quickly became so powerful that some filmmakers once again sought independence. Griffith formed United Artists, the first independent studio in America. Hart a year earlier as they were traveling around the U. Already veterans of Hollywood, the four film stars began to talk of forming their own company to better control their own work as well as their futures. With the addition of Griffith, planning began, but Hart bowed out before things had formalized. When he heard about their scheme, Richard A. Rowland , head of Metro Pictures , is said to have observed, "The inmates are taking over the asylum. The original terms called for Pickford, Fairbanks, Griffith and Chaplin to independently produce five pictures each year, but by the time the company got under way in 1918", feature films were becoming more expensive and more polished, and running times had settled at around ninety minutes or eight reels. It was believed that no one, no matter how popular, could produce and star in five quality feature films a year. By 1919, Griffith had dropped out and the company was facing a crisis: The veteran producer Joseph Schenck was hired as president. Not only had he been producing pictures for a decade, but he brought along commitments for films starring his wife, Norma Talmadge , his sister-in-law, Constance Talmadge , and his brother-in-law, Buster Keaton. Contracts were signed with a number of independent producers, especially Samuel Goldwyn , Howard Hughes and later Alexander Korda. Schenck also formed a separate partnership with Pickford and Chaplin to buy and build theaters under the United Artists name. Still, even with a broadening of the company, UA struggled. The coming of sound ended the careers of Pickford and Fairbanks. Chaplin, rich enough to do what he pleased, worked only occasionally. Schenck resigned in 1921 to organize a new company with Darryl F. He was replaced as president by sales manager Al Lichtman who himself resigned after only a few months. Selznick were made "producing partners" in 1921. As the years passed and the dynamics of the business changed, these "producing partners" drifted away. By the late 1920s, United Artists had virtually ceased to exist as either a producer or distributor. The Society aimed to preserve the rights of independent producers in an industry overwhelmingly controlled by the studio system. SIMPP fought to end monopolistic practices by the five major Hollywood studios which controlled the production, distribution, and exhibition of films. The complaint accused Paramount of conspiracy to control first-run and subsequent-run theaters in Detroit. It was the first antitrust suit brought by producers against exhibitors alleging monopoly and restraint of trade. In 1938, the United States Supreme Court Paramount Decision ordered the Hollywood movie studios to sell their theater chains and to eliminate certain anti-competitive practices. Low-budget film The efforts of the SIMPP and the advent of inexpensive portable cameras during World War II effectively made it possible for any person in America with an interest in making films to write, produce, and direct one without the aid of any major film studio. Filmmakers such as Ken Jacobs with little or no formal training began to experiment with new ways of making and shooting films. It also received Silver Lion at Venice. Unlike the films made within the studio system, these new low-budget films could afford to take risks and explore new artistic territory outside the classical Hollywood narrative. Maya Deren was soon joined in New York by a crowd of like minded avant-garde filmmakers who were interested in creating films as works of art rather than entertainment. When he returned to America, Ken Anger would debut many of his most important works there. Mekas and Brakhage would go on to found the Anthology Film Archives in 1968, which would likewise prove essential to the development and preservation of independent films, even to this day. B movies The exploitation boom Not all low-budget films existed as non-commercial art ventures. The success of films like Little Fugitive, which had been made with low or sometimes non-existent budgets encouraged a huge boom in popularity for non-studio films. Low-budget film making promised exponentially greater returns in terms of percentages if the film could have a successful run in the theaters. Until his so-called "retirement" as a director in 1968 he continued to produce films even after this date he would produce up to seven movies a year, matching and often exceeding

the five-per-year schedule that the executives at United Artists had once thought impossible. Like those of the avante-garde, the films of Roger Corman took advantage of the fact that unlike the studio system, independent films had never been bound by its self-imposed production code. By promising sex, wanton violence, drug use, and nudity, these films hoped to draw audiences to independent theaters by offering to show them what the major studios could not. Horror and science fiction films experienced a period of tremendous growth during this time. As these tiny producers, theaters, and distributors continued to attempt to undercut one another, the B-grade shlock film soon fell to the level of the Z movie, a niche category of films with production values so low that they became a spectacle in their own right. The cult audiences these pictures attracted soon made them ideal candidates for midnight movie screenings revolving around audience participation and cosplay. In 1968, a young filmmaker named George A. Romero shocked audiences with *Night of the Living Dead*, a new kind of intense and unforgiving independent horror film. This film was released just after the abandonment of the production code, but before the adoption of the MPAA rating system. This film would help to set the climate of independent horror for decades to come, as films like *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* and *Cannibal Holocaust* continued to push the envelope. This change would further widen the divide between commercial and non-commercial films.

New Hollywood Following the advent of television and the Paramount Case, the major studios attempted to lure audiences with spectacle. Widescreen processes and technical improvements, such as Cinemascope, stereo sound, 3-D and others, were developed in an attempt to retain the dwindling audience by giving them a larger-than-life experience. The 1950s and early 1960s saw a Hollywood dominated by musicals, historical epics, and other films which benefited from these advances. This proved commercially viable during most of the 1950s. However, by the late 1950s, audience share was dwindling at an alarming rate. Several costly flops, including *Cleopatra* and *Hello, Dolly!* Meanwhile, in 1960, lawyers-turned-producers Arthur Krim and Robert Benjamin had made a deal with the remaining stockholders of United Artists which would allow them to make an attempt to revive the company and, if the attempt was successful, buy it after five years. The attempt was a success, and in 1960 United Artists became the first "studio" without an actual studio. Because of this, many of their films would be shot on location. Primarily acting as bankers, they offered money to independent producers. Thus UA did not have the overhead, the maintenance or the expensive production staff which ran up costs at other studios. UA went public in 1960, and as the other mainstream studios fell into decline, UA prospered, adding relationships with the Mirisch brothers, Billy Wilder, and Joseph E. By the late 1960s, RKO had ceased film production, and the remaining four of big five had recognized that they did not know how to reach the youth audience. In an attempt to capture this audience, the Studios hired a host of young filmmakers many of whom were mentored by Roger Corman and allowed them to make their films with relatively little studio control. This initial successes paved the way for the studio to relinquish almost complete control to the film school generation and began what the media dubbed "New Hollywood. It became the first and only X rated film to win the Academy Award for best picture. Through *Zoetrope*, Coppola formed a distribution agreement with studio giant Warner Bros. These three films provided the major Hollywood studios with both an example to follow and a new crop of talent to draw from. In the mids, the major Hollywood studios continued to tap these new filmmakers for both ideas and personnel, producing films such as *Paper Moon* and *Taxi Driver*, all of which met with critical and commercial success. These successes by the members of New Hollywood led each of them in turn to make more and more extravagant demands, both on the studio and eventually on the audience. While most members of the New Hollywood generation were, or started out as, independent filmmakers, a number of their projects were produced and released by major studios. The New Hollywood generation soon became firmly entrenched in a revived incarnation of the studio system, which financed the development, production and distribution of their films. Though Coppola made considerable efforts to resist the influence of the studios, opting to finance his risky film *Apocalypse Now* himself rather than compromise with skeptical studio executives, he, and filmmakers like him, had saved the old studios from financial ruin by providing them with a new formula for success. Indeed, it was during this period that the very definition of an independent film became blurred. Though *Midnight Cowboy* was financed by United Artists, the company was certainly a studio. Likewise, *Zoetrope* was another "independent studio" which worked within the system to make a space for independent directors who needed funding.

George Lucas would leave Zoetrope in to create his own independent studio, Lucasfilm , which would produce the blockbuster Star Wars and Indiana Jones franchises. Peter Bogdanovich bought back the rights from the studio to his film and paid for its distribution out of his own pocket, convinced that the picture was better than what the studio believed – he eventually went bankrupt because of this. On realizing how much money could potentially be made in films, major corporations started buying up the remaining Hollywood studios, saving them from the oblivion which befell RKO in the 50s. Eventually, even RKO was revived. The corporate mentality these companies brought to the filmmaking business would slowly squeeze out the more idiosyncratic of these young filmmakers, while ensconcing the more malleable and commercially successful of them. Outside Hollywood[edit] During the s, shifts in thematic depictions of sexuality and violence occurred in American cinema, prominently featuring heightened depictions of realistic sex and violence. Directors who wished to reach mainstream audiences of Old Hollywood quickly learned to stylize these themes to make their films appealing and attractive rather than repulsive or obscene. However, at the same time that the maverick film students of the American New Wave were developing the skills they would use to take over Hollywood, many of their peers had begun to develop their style of filmmaking in a different direction. Influenced by foreign and art house directors such as Ingmar Bergman and Federico Fellini ,exploitation shockers i. Mawra , Michael Findlay , and Henri Pachard and avant-garde cinema, Kenneth Anger , Maya Deren a number of young film makers began to experiment with transgression not as a box-office draw, but as an artistic act. Directors such as John Waters and David Lynch would make a name for themselves by the early s for the bizarre and often disturbing imagery which characterized their films. Though Eraserhead was strictly an out-of-pocket, low-budget, independent film, Lynch made the transition with unprecedented grace. The film was a huge commercial success, and earned eight Academy Award nominations, including Best Director and Best Adapted Screenplay nods for Lynch. It also established his place as a commercially viable, if somewhat dark and unconventional, Hollywood director. Seeing Lynch as a fellow studio convert, George Lucas , a fan of Eraserhead and now the darling of the studios, offered Lynch the opportunity to direct his next Star Wars sequel, Return of the Jedi However, Lynch had seen what had happened to Lucas and his comrades in arms after their failed attempt to do away with the studio system. He refused the opportunity, stating that he would rather work on his own projects. De Laurentiis, furious that the film had been a commercial disaster, was then forced to produce any film Lynch desired. Lynch subsequently returned to independent filmmaking, and did not work with another major studio for over a decade. Unlike the former, John Waters released most of his films during his early life through his own production company, Dreamland Productions. In the early s, New Line Cinema agreed to work with him on Polyester During the s, Waters would become a pillar of the New York-based independent film movement known as the " Cinema of Transgression ", a term coined by Nick Zedd in to describe a loose-knit group of like-minded New York artists using shock value and humor in their Super 8 mm films and video art. At the time, the main focus of the event was to present a series of retrospective films and filmmaker panel discussions; however it also included a small program of new independent films. In , the same year that United Artists, bought out by MGM, ceased to exist as a venue for independent filmmakers, Sterling Van Wagenen left the film festival to help found the Sundance Institute with Robert Redford. In , the now well-established Sundance Institute, headed by Sterling Van Wagenen, took over management of the US Film Festival, which was experiencing financial difficulties.

Chapter 4 : www.nxgvision.com - Distribution Guide for Independent Filmmakers

An independent film, independent movie, indie film or indie movie is a feature film or short film that is produced outside the major film studio system, in addition to being produced and distributed by independent entertainment companies.

Chapter 5 : Cheerful Subversive's Guide to Independent Filmmaking - www.nxgvision.com

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Chapter 6 : Independent film - Wikipedia

In The Cheerful Subversive's Guide to Independent Filmmaking, celebrated Slamdance Film Festival co-founder Dan Mirvish offers a rich exploration of the process and culture of making low-budget, independent films.